

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FOOD AID FOR AFGHANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I know the American people want to help the suffering people of Afghanistan. And I am sorry to say that we already stand condemned by Medecins Sans Frontieres for conducting nothing more than a propaganda campaign regarding our food drops.

Our brave young men and women are risking their lives to deliver this food, and how will we be judged, however, by this latest blunder?

I ask my colleagues to take a look at this object and this object. To more than just a casual observer, they might even get mistaken for the same thing. And that is what has got the U.S. military quaking in their boots. Can one imagine the horror if this object, a cluster bomb, gets mistaken for this object, a food packet? One is life and the other one is death. The squarish one is the food. The roundish one is a cluster bomb. That is what the poor starving people of Afghanistan must now contend with.

The U.S. military is dropping little notes to inform people not to pick up this one, the cluster bomb, thinking it is food because if they pick up this one, which is the wrong one, they will get blown to smithereens.

Is it not bad enough that our military is dropping cluster bombs on Afghanistan anyway? Well, it is really bad because in the war in Kosovo, then-Major General Ryan refused to allow cluster bombs to be dropped because of the civilian deaths associated with cluster bombs, especially the children. But now our Air Force Chief of Staff Ryan refuses to issue such a directive, it appears, as the U.S. comes under fire from humanitarian organizations around the world for dropping cluster bombs on the people of Afghanistan.

I have written a letter to our President asking that we please refrain from using cluster bombs. But a funny thing about cluster bombs. They have little bomblets that look like things; and so when kids see them, they think they are a toy or something.

Now, Afghanistan already has 10 million landmines, and the unexploded

bomblets from the cluster bombs add to that number. So now if the food looks like this object, what will hungry children do? But if the food looks like this object and the bombs look like this object, what would any hungry person do? The military bets that they are going to try to find something to eat. And so the Pentagon is concerned that people who are hungry for food that looks like this object will confuse it with bomblets that look like this object. The Pentagon is now worried that hungry Afghan people will try to eat the bombs thinking that it is American food.

So the Pentagon has sent messages to the Afghan people. One message says, "As you may have heard, the Partnership of Nations is dropping yellow humanitarian daily rations. Although it is unlikely, it is possible that not every bomb will explode on impact. These bombs are a yellow color and are can-shaped."

Another Pentagon message is more to the point. It says, "Please, please exercise caution when approaching yellow unidentified objects in areas that have been recently bombed."

Mr. Speaker, not only do innocent Afghans have to worry about the Taliban, not only do they have to worry about landmines left over from the last war, not only do they have to worry about starving to death and the approaching winter, now they have to worry about bombs that look like food. I think I have heard it all now, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BIOTERRORIST ATTACKS AND ANTIBIOTICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we in Congress cannot go home to our districts and say we have taken the steps necessary to prepare for future bioterrorist attacks unless and until we confront the issue of antibiotic resistance. The links between antibiotic resistance and bioterrorism are clear. Antibiotic resistant strains of anthrax and other microbes are among the most lethal of biological weapons, and they are a reality. There are published reports of an anthrax strain engineered by Russian scientists to resist the penicillin and tetracycline classes of antibiotics. We can only assume that anthrax and other lethal agents will be engineered to resist new antibiotics like Cipro.

Antibiotic resistance is significant in other important ways. Overuse and

misuse of antibiotics will render most microbes resistant to our current stockpile of drugs, potentially leaving the Nation poorly prepared in the event of biological attacks. To some extent this is a vicious cycle. Bioterrorist threats can lead to overuse of current antibiotics, which in turn render these antibiotics less effective against the lethal agents used in bioterrorism.

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Look at Cipro, for example. Widespread use of Cipro, a broad-spectrum antibiotic, would kill bacteria that are susceptible to Cipro. The bacteria that are not killed will be those that evolve resistance to Cipro. Those Cipro resistant bacteria then flourish unchecked unless an even stronger antibiotic is available to kill them.

Many bacteria that cause severe human illness are already resistant to older antibiotics like penicillin. That is one reason the drug of choice is often one of the newer antibiotics like Cipro. If the U.S. and the rest of the world begin using Cipro indiscriminately, then Cipro, that antibiotic, will lose its effectiveness also.

To adequately prepare for a terrorist attack, State and local health departments must be equipped to rapidly identify and respond to antibiotic resistant strains of anthrax and other lethal agents. And to ensure the continued efficacy of our antibiotic stockpile, we must isolate emerging antibiotic resistant pathogens, track antibiotic overuse and misuse, and monitor the effectiveness of existing treatments over time.

Surveillance provides the data needed to prioritize the research and the development of new antibiotic treatments. Drug resistant pathogens are a growing threat to each of us as Americans. Examples of important microbes that are rapidly developing resistance to available antimicrobials include the bacteria that cause ear infections, that cause pneumonia, that cause meningitis, and skin and bone and lung and blood stream infections. Importantly, this list also includes food borne infections like salmonella.

The Nation's food supply has been identified as a potential vehicle for future bioterrorist attacks. Experts across the public health spectrum have testified to the seriousness of antibiotic resistance. Congress should respond appropriately and quickly to these warnings before the threat of what could become what is.

Under last year's Public Health Threats and Emergencies Act sponsored by my colleagues, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK), Congress authorized a grant program that equips State and local health departments to identify and to track antibiotic resistance. My friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT), and I are requesting that the Committee on Appropriations include at least \$50 million for this grant